

of Israel, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart?" Has not God made his people "kings and priests unto God," for the express purpose that they might present to him, day by day, the offerings of thanksgiving and praise? What a privilege! Why should you deprive yourselves of a privilege so precious? Seek, like Jacob, in availing yourselves of it, to make your house "a Bethel," where God delights to dwell. Say, with Joshua, "As for me and my house," whatever others do, "we will serve the Lord." Join with David in the summons you address, from time to time, to the members of your family, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." And when, do you ask, is all this to be done? The answer is, "To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

2. The training of the young for God, requires that Family Worship be observed. The upbringing of children in the fear, and for the service of God, is one essential object of the family institution; and, for this "godly upbringing," prayer is as necessary as are religious instruction and example. There is no more favourable channel through which religious truth may be conveyed to the mind of a child than parental instruction, provided that that instruction be accompanied by the influence of daily example. God accordingly has said, for the encouragement of parents, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." But religious "training" consists mainly, as you know, in the formation of religious habits and principles; and success in the forming of these God gives in answer to believing prayer. It is right, indeed, that instruction in the things of God should be given; but this will be comparatively of little avail, unless the character is moulded in conformity with the gospel of Christ. And how can a parent train up his child in religious habits, if he himself sets not before him the example of religion? How can he hope to make the members of his family the worshippers of God, if he himself, instead of leading them daily to the family altar, teaches them by his example "to forget God?" All the special influence, in such a case, assigned by God to a parent, for promoting the spiritual well-being of his offspring, is lost; and what was designed, in the highest sense, for good, is, by the neutralising influence of parental example, turned into evil. And what a calamity is thus entailed, extending, not to the existing generation merely, but to those that follow! Say, ye who act in this way towards your children, is it thus you show your affection for them? Is it thus you discharge the solemn vows you undertook on their behalf, when you dedicated them to the Lord in baptism? Are not your children "God's heritage," which he has

a right to expect you will take care of for him? Has not the Saviour said to you, in regard to your young ones, "Suffer them to come unto me?" And shall it be the case that, by your example, powerful for evil or for good, you will not "suffer" them to come unto him? Nay, rather, bring them to the Saviour, under the gracious assurance, "that of such is the kingdom of heaven." And then, in your case, as in the case of others, will be fulfilled the saying,

"Race unto race shall praise thy works,
And show thy mighty deeds."

3. God's dealings with families, as such, call for their daily worship of him. It cannot be doubted that, with an adjusting hand, God's dispensations are measured out to families as well as to individuals. These dispensations, are intended for their benefit; and, where observed and improved, are "made to work for their good." Some of the most tender and sanctifying influences are derived from this source, whereby God makes his people "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Has not the head of a family much to say to God, in representing their interests and feelings, in spreading out their case before Him who is the hearer of prayer, and in craving that himself and his house, by night and by day, may be under the protection of Jehovah? Does not God send to us, from time to time, domestic trials and afflictions? Is he not ever and again affording to us special family deliverances? Are we not, day by day, receiving, as families, innumerable benefits at the hand of God, for which we are called to bless his name? Have we not family sins which we are called daily to confess unto God? And shall all this be the case, and there be no voice, on our part, to give utterance at the throne of grace to those joys and sorrows, those cares and griefs, and varied anxieties we experience, as families, arising from the dealings of God! O! why should a parent, who loves his family, refuse to plead with God on their behalf, in common supplication, or decline to be the organ of their communication with God, for the purpose of expressing their wants, or giving utterance to their thanksgiving and praise? Why should any head of a family be silent when God is saying unto him, for his comfort and the comfort of those under his care, "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God?" "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, to show his loving-kindness in the morning and his faithfulness every night." And.

4. The church has need of the prayers of her families, for the success of her ordinances, and the operations in which she is engaged for the spread of the gospel. When God blesses Zion, he makes all the dwellings round about it a blessing. From

these dwellings is heard daily the voice of melody and joy, of thanksgiving and praise, of entreaty and supplication, as the inmates pour out their hearts before God, in contemplation of the varied aspects of his procedure towards his church. It is a happy sign of the state of a church, when "each family apart" takes a becoming interest in the church's affairs, and sends up prayers to God daily on her behalf. It is when such prayers ascend daily from the family altar, that we may expect that conversions will take place unto God, that God "will bless Zion's provision, and satisfy her poor with bread," and that the Holy Spirit will be poured out in rich effusion from on high, giving effect to the gospel, and causing men everywhere throughout our earth "to see the salvation of God." And why should not every family belonging to our church engage, morning and evening, in this holy concert for prayer, supplicating a blessing on her ministers and rulers, her missionaries and teachers, her ordinances and operations, and on all, of every name, who are called of God, and who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth? Should the families of our church be trained from earliest years to contribute to our mission, and not be taught daily to pray to God for their success? We shall only rise to the grandeur of our missionary enterprise, when each family of our church, not less than each individual, is found resolving that it will "give God no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Then may we expect God to bless our efforts, to revive his work in our congregations, and to add to his church by our instrumentality, "multitudes of such as shall be saved."

In submitting to you, dear brethren, in the name of the Synod, these few remarks on this all-important subject, afterwards to be dwelt upon more fully by your esteemed ministers, from whom you statedly hear the word of God, enough, we trust, has been said, to lead heads of households, who are in the habit of worshipping God in their families, to prize, and increasingly improve, their privilege, and also to convince you, who, as parents or heads of families, are neglecting the duty of family worship, of the claims which God has upon you, to erect the family altar, and to call on the name of the Lord. Let the commencement, then, of the new year on which you are now entering, be to you, in respect of this matter, "as the beginning of months." Say not, there is no urgency in this matter; it may be delayed. Remember that delay brings with it an accumulation of guilt. Family prayer marred through lack of "the spirit of life which is in Christ," degenerate into empty forms, but the neglect of known duty may even be a positive sin. Say not, there is no danger involved in leaving undone the command of God. Consider how God pours out his fury on the families that